



KELLY'S CRIME CORNER

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COYOTE CONFLICTS

Coyote sightings have been on the rise in Costa Mesa. Several residents have reported losing their pets to coyotes, and part of the reason may be that residents do not realize coyotes live in such close proximity to us.

Coyotes are found in all parts of Orange County. Contrary to popular belief, these animals do not require open space or wild areas to survive. Though we live by open space here in Costa Mesa (the Back Bay and Fairview Park), most coyotes within urban areas are the offspring of generations of coyotes who have lived and flourished in the urban areas that we live in.

Though these animals are comfortable living in close proximity to human beings, they are far from domesticated. They have little fear of man. They are not normally a danger to humans, and will display defensive behaviors if threatened or cornered. It is also very important to educate children from a very early age to avoid strange animals, whether they are domestic or non-domestic. Coyotes are very agile, and can easily scale a residential fence.

Small pets can easily become coyote prey. Though coyotes generally hunt between sunset and sunrise, they can be observed at all hours of the day and will not pass up the opportunity for an easy meal. A dog or cat left in a backyard can be taken in a matter of moments.

Here are some steps you can take to protect your property from coyotes and other wildlife:

WILDLIFE SAFETY

- Fence off animal enclosures
- Keep cats and small dogs indoors or in the close presence of an adult
- Feed pets indoors - if you feed them outside, pick up any leftover food immediately
- Store trash in covered heavy-duty containers
- Keep yards free from potential shelter such as thick brush and weeds
- Enclose the bottom of porches and decks
- Eliminate potential food and water sources, such as fallen fruit and standing water



OC CRIME STOPPERS

Orange County Crime Stoppers helps resolve, reduce and prevent crime by enabling citizens to safely report Criminal activity to law enforcement through anonymous crime tips. Crimes can be reports either by telephone or on the web. Any information sent assures the anonymity of the tipster so there is no fear of reprisal to the tipster or their family.

Phone tips are received at a central call center using a toll free number - **1-855-TIP-OCCS**. The phone lines are encrypted and no phone calls are ever recorded. Tips are then sent to OC Crime Stoppers for further evaluation. Web tips have integrated two-way capability that allows the tipster to go back and provide addition information to the tip at any time, as well as providing a means for the coordinator to ask questions of the tipster through the same secure interface, without the tipster having to identify them.

There are more than 300 Crime Stoppers organizations in the United States and over 1,400 worldwide. This program has proven to be an asset to any community, with over 850,000 arrests made, over 1.2 million crimes cleared, and 8 billion dollars in property and drugs recovered in the last 33 years.

Costa Mesa Police Department is proud to partner with OC Crime Stoppers!



INTERNET GAMING AND KIDS

Many parents think that online games are simply a form of entertainment. However, children also have the chance to learn important life skills while gaming. They use their imaginations, and employ problem-solving strategies while playing games. They also use their social skills through interaction with other gamers.

These games use instant chat features, forums, and voice-enabled interactions, which allows children to communicate and collaborate with gamers all over the world.

The downside of this is that these features expose children to people who may not have their best interests in mind. Many of these features allow users to interact anonymously. Some people may take advantage of this anonymity to target children by sending inappropriate content or by using the communication functions to arrange an in-person meeting. Some game consoles allow internet access

as well, so it is important to be aware of any communications features your children may have access to while gaming. Here are some tips to keep your child safe while gaming:

- Know which safety features are available on the gaming equipment your child uses
- Keep gaming consoles in an easy-to-supervise location and be aware of other places where your child may be accessing games
- Tell your child never to give out personal information while gaming or agree to meet anyone outside of the game
- Set rules about how long your child may play and what games are appropriate
- Check to see if the games your child plays have reporting features or moderators

